

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH



COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO

OFFICE OF PUBLIC HEALTH ADMINISTRATION
351 North Mountain View Avenue, Third Floor ♦ San Bernardino, CA 92415-0010
(909) 387-9146 ♦ Fax (909) 387-6228

JIM LINDLEY, M.P.A.
Public Health Director

PAULA MEARES-CONRAD
Assistant Director of Public Health

MAXWELL OHIKHUARE, M.D.
Health Officer

CONTACT: Maxwell Ohikhuare, M.D.
Health Officer
(909) 387-6218

October 23, 2009
PR # 09-92
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

San Bernardino County Public Health Officer Announces Seventeenth Death from H1N1 Flu Virus

SAN BERNARDINO – There have been six more deaths in the County from the pandemic (H1N1) 2009 influenza virus, for a total of seventeen this year. San Bernardino County Public Health Officer, Maxwell Ohikhuare, M.D., stated that “the deaths occurred during the past three weeks, and included two females that were 22 and 26 years of age, three 41 year old males, and one 8 year old female.” He noted that all of the patients had underlying health conditions.

San Bernardino County has reported 248 confirmed pandemic (H1N1) influenza cases to the state. Most people have experienced mild or moderate illness and have fully recovered. “As flu becomes more widespread this fall, everyone should take an active role to prevent infection, and avoid spreading the virus if they do get sick,” stated Dr. Ohikhuare.

The Department of Public Health and some health care providers have received a limited supply of the live intranasal H1N1 influenza vaccine (FluMist). The only priority groups who are eligible to get the vaccine at this time include:

- Healthy children two to 18 years of age, especially those younger than ten (10) years who are recommended to get two doses (30 days apart), for complete immunizations, and
- Healthy household contacts (two to 49 years of age) that take care of infants less than six (6) months of age.

A new shipment of H1N1 influenza vaccine is expected to arrive next week. Information about the priority groups and the clinic locations will be provided as soon as it is available.

The annual flu vaccine is being distributed at countywide Public Health Clinic sites, to the following people:

- Infants and children aged 6 months up to their 18th birthday,
- Anyone 50 years of age and older,
- Anyone with chronic medical conditions,
- Pregnant women,
- Caregivers of those at high risk for complications from flu, such as seniors and people with weakened immune systems, and

-more-

MARK UFFER
County Administrative Officer

Board of Supervisors
BRAD MITZELFELT.....First District NEIL DERRY.....Third District
PAUL BIANE.....Second District GARY C. OVITT.....Fourth District
JOSIE GONZALES.....Fifth District

- Household contacts and out-of-home care givers of infants less than 6 months of age, because these infants are too young to be vaccinated.

In addition to getting vaccinated, the best way to prevent infection with a flu virus is to take these simple steps:

- Cough and sneeze into a tissue or your elbow. Dispose of the tissue after use.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water and/or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Avoid close contact with sick people.
- Stay home from work or school and limit contact with others if you have flu-like symptoms.
- If you become infected with influenza, wait at least 24 hours after the fever subsides without the use of fever-reducing medications, before going back to work or school.

Call a health care provider when symptoms are serious, like trouble breathing, or chest pain.

For more information on H1N1 or seasonal influenza, call the San Bernardino County Department of Public Health at (800) 782-4264, or visit the website at www.sbcounty.gov/dph. You may also go to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services website at <http://www.flu.gov/>.

#